projects worth Rs. 55 crores, on what considerations and on what terms and conditions;

(c) whether tenders were floated and bids received; if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether these contracts were awarded before designated Technical Evaluation Committee submitted its report, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the recommendations of Technical Evaluation Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) (i) The names of the firms are:

(1) M/s Vikas Hybrid & Electronics Ltd. (VHEL)

(2) M/s. Sterlite Industries Ltd.

(ii) The orders were placed on following considerations:

M/s VHEL had offered the lowest prices in the earlier tender opened on 6.7.93, and were not given add on order earlier as were given to others. M/s Sterlite had excellent supply record and had large manufacturing capacity to deliver the goods in short period.

(iii) The terms and condition of the orders were:—

(1) The entire supply shall be completed within 45 days from the date of issue of orders.

(2) The final prices shall be as to be finalised for the ongoing tender opened on 6.4.95.

(c) The tender was floated and opened on 6.4.95. A total of 18 bids were received.

(d) Purchase had to be made to meet the urgent field requirement pending finalisation of tender which was to take considerable time.

(e) The report of the Tender Evaluation Committee is under Examination.

Relaxation in theory paper in Amateur Wireless Station Operations examination to the Blind

1111. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Blind students and youth are taking interest in Amateur Wireless Operation activity;

(b) whether Government would consider relaxing the theory paper in the Amateur Wireless Station Operators Examination for the blind persons and allow them to give that paper orally, and

(c) if so, by when the instruction in this regard will be issued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government is following the practice of permitting a blind candidate to avail of the assistance of a writer for answering the theory paper.

Computerised Reservation Facilities

1112. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of stations where computerised reservation facility has been made available together with the names of stations for which return tickets and reservation through computers can be made from Delhi;

(b) the names of stations where these facilities are likely to be made in 1995-96;

(c) whether railways have any plan for computerised booking for the next few years and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of complaints received regarding computerised reservation particularly during holidays/rush seasons and the activities of touts in important cities and details of remedial measures taken?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b) An annexure is attached. [See Appendix 174—Annexure No. 33]

(c) Provision of computerised reservation facilities is planned on an annual basis keeping in view the reservation workload and other relevant factors including feasibility and availability of reasources.

(d) During Jan.' 95 to June' 95 594 complaints regarding time taken to issue tickets on computer, non-allotment of lower berths/compact accommodation, refusal to issue tickets etc. were received in respect of computer reservation centers. As regards activities of louts, some complaints have come to notice. Surprise checks are conducted by deploying Ticket Checking Staff alongwith RPF/GRP personnel to curb the evil. During Jan. 95 to June' 95,799 touts were apprehended and suitable action was taken against them as per the provision of the Railway Act, 1989.

"Declaring Neem as National Tree"

1113. SHRI KRISHNA LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Neem is regarded as a curer of practically all diseases of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Neem plays a very crucial role in providing ecologically sustainable solutions to the various problems being faced by the country at present; and

(c) if so, whether Government are considering to declare Neem as a National Tree and if so, when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Research so far has proved that Neem extracts and its derivatives have anti-protozoal anti-allergic, anti-dermatitic, anti-fungal and insecticidal properties;

(b) Use of natural plant products is considered to be a safe alternative to the synthetic chemicals. Biopesticides developed from Neem meet the ecological criteria due to their low or non toxic properties. Being broad spectrum in nature, they reduce the chances of pest becoming resistant. In additon, they are biodegradable also.

(c) Presently, there is no proposal in this Ministry to declare Neem as a National Tree.

Building International Opinion Against Kidnappings in Kashmir by Pak-Traincd Militants

1114. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government to build international opinion against kidnapping in Kashmir by the Pak-trained militants; and

(b) what is the reaction of the Government of Pakistan to the cases of kidnappings in Kashmir by the militants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) Government have and will continue to take necessary measures to apprise the international community of Pakistan's support to terrorists including to those involved in kidnappings in Jammu and Kashmir.

Government have, during the course of usual ministerial, official and diplomatic exchanges with other countries informed